July 16, 1966

Dear good, kind, thoughtful, unmet California friends:

It is embarrassing to be writing, for the first time in my 53 years, a round-robin letter. I have always found any kind of a form letter unsatisfying. The alternative is that I not write, for I have been so snowed under. It is this alone which has made me seem to be ill-mannered and unappreciative of all the fine things so many of you have done and are doing for me and for the things we all share in wanting.

This letter will be in the nature of a "progress" report and will explain why I just haven't been able to write each of you individually as I should and ultimately will, especially those of you who have just sent me such exciting materials.

First, in every available moment, I have been continuing my work and I believe this has been quite fruitful, even though sporadic. I am working on a sequel and until I had to abandon its writing, I had drafted perhaps 20-25%. The appearance of the Knebel piece impelled me to heed the exhortations of East Coast friends, and I have prepared a rather lengthy (55 pages) and totally devastating analysis. I have been honoring all requests for speaking engagements, none of which are profitable, but because they provide an opportunity for informing people, and I have been fortunate in having had offers of numerous radio and now television appearances lasting as much as four unrelieved hours and often requiring lengthy and arduous trips. Thursday night and Friday morning I videotaped what will undoubtedly be the most exciting thing thus far on the East Coast for Metromedia which, so far as I know, plans to use it only on WNEW-TV in New York. I was to have a fourth of the usual two-hour Allen Burke Show but will have the entire two hours in what amounts to a "special". For this we are entirely indebted to a well organized "plot" against me by a half-dozen lawyers acting on behalf, if not at the behest, of the former Commission staff members. They were armed with copies of WHITEWASH and the Report, were ill-mannered, ill-informed, dishonest, and, in general, what I have come to realize is the best possible opposition to make any appearance on this subject most exciting and most successful. Their own ignorance and passion blind their reasoning and, as did the radical right on the Long John Show, they made me look like Sir Galahad on his white charger, by giving the appearanne of trying to persecute me, trying to overwhelm me with talk and insults, then to deny me the chance to answer their questions; before I reduced them to total silence, they found themselves in the bankruptcy of sheer invective. The end result was that I captured the studio audience, the staff of the station, and especially the executive personnel of the show, and I believe a television audience when it is shown in about a week. They added to the content of the subject matter the continuing feeling of suppression and gave the presentation a background of conflict that, of course, made it quite dramatic. Altho the MC has a reputation for being nasty, he could not have been kinder to me, I believe largely as the result of the behavior of these lawyers, and the show closed on a mixture of my uninterrupted discussion of the ballistics and the high praise of the MC.

There is also pending a four-hour radio appearance on the largest station in Philadelphia and a half-hour show on a TV station there. I believe I have arranged for Vincent Salandria to have a similar show of his own and there is a possibility of more attention from the electronic media in Philadelphia for I have agreed to a confrontation with Arlen Specter but have suggested that, to allow people to learn more of the subject matter and to avoid any possibility of the involvement of this subject matter with local politics, it be delayed. I have no reason to believe Specter will now agree.

The East Coast Educational TV network is offering me (and I have accepted without reservation) a "FOCUS" program. The date hinges upon the resolution of a format dispute between the Washington and New York outlets. I have told both I will agree to anything they want and the problem involves them alone. Other similar things are in prospect, and all, of course, require some time.

Time, even with the foreshortened night, is my continuing problem and the reason I have not written any of you adequately, or even had a chance to study carefully your excellent materials. It is also the reason that I haven't written Joe Dolan as he deserves to be for I always hope to get an uninterrupted couple of hours when I can really thank him for being the kind of wonderful person he must be and to give him an idea of the fine thing

he has accomplished. There were no copies of WHITEWASH in San Francisco bookstores the night of his broadcast and there could not have been many, if any, before the 5th of July. Our West Coast distributor had 500 copies; he phoned on the 8th of July and ordered 500 more and again two days ago, on the 14th, for another 500. This cleans out the entire supply at the printer's and leaves us with about 500 that we will use as judiciously as possible until we can go back to press. This we will do as soon as we get enough money from the distributors. Most of you know we were both broke and in debt when we arranged for this printing, entirely on credit. Every cent that has come in - gross - has been set aside for the printer. We have not even taken from it the cost of postage. Thus, we hope before the present edition is entirely exhausted and when the promised checks from the distributors arrive, to pay the printer for the first edition and to start the second. He has agreed and, without overtime, will do the job in a week. It will take the entire gross income from sales of whatever kind to pay only the actual costs of this first edition, if, in fact, it covers all of them, and I tell you this only because $4.95 is a relatively high price for a paper-backed book. No matter how many editions we are fortunate enough to require, there is no possibility of profit, our investment, as those of you working in the field can understand, is of that magnitude. We have had an unsatisfactory offer from a major paperback house and the book to our knowledge is under consideration at another one of the largest firms. I do not believe that there has been a sufficient change in the climate for any of them to now make a favorable decision except possibly for a book by a major publisher. Lane's and Epstein's, from my information, have already been declined by a number, but Lane's is to be an alternate selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club in the near future.

Throughout this long and very difficult period, one of the things that has meant most has been the presence of an always ready and, in almost every case, previously unknown helping hand - good people who, in whatever way they could, were willing to help and tried, often with success, such as Hal Verb's with the Joe Nolan Show; he also is one I have not had the time to write with adequate thanks if, indeed, he can be adequately thanked.

There is one thing that is abundantly clear to me: This program, the Joe Nolan Show, is certainly close to the hottest thing in the country for an advertiser, as Raymar especially, I think, clearly proves.

Within the past week, we have been asked for serialization rights in Spain and book rights in Italy. Fortunately, I have an agent in England and hopefully turned these over to him. BBC aired a five-minute program on their network TV news Thursday night, filmed here, surprisingly enough, on Wednesday morning, and when the film went to England, it was accompanied by copies of some of the more exhiting documentation. I hear also from England that Lane's publisher is making vigorous approaches to British newspapers for serialization.

So, good and new friends, please forgive my seeming impoliteness in not answering you individually and promptly for I am going and, as long as possible, will continue to go, at a pace that denies me the possibility without letting the work suffer. Your warm letters do really mean very much, as do your successful and so encouraging efforts, and I do hope you will understand our situation and continue your flow of kind words and worthwhile materials, for all are so helpful. With deepest appreciation, I do assure you that I will, as soon as I can, reply to each of you and if I can do nothing else, whenever there is something worth reporting, will at least use a means similar to this.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg